

Bill Clinton
President of the
United States of America

Dear Mr. President:

Although we do not know each other personally, I feel that you will respond with understanding to my appeal regarding a matter which greatly disturbs me at this time.

I know that you will soon have to take a decision on whether to resume the program of nuclear testing. I understand that this is not an easy issue for you.

Of course, you are being presented with arguments in favor of conducting a certain number of tests. As a person who was involved in starting the process of real nuclear disarmament I would ask you to hear other arguments.

The resumption of testing could seriously undermine efforts in an area that I know has priority for you as well as most of the statesmen in other countries. - that of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. It would not be helpful in terms of obtaining early adherence of Ukraine to the non-proliferation treaty and ratification of the START treaty by former Soviet republics.

I also have to mention the ecological aspect of this problem. Given the specific features of the test-site at Novaya Zemlya, which is the only one that remains available to Russia, it is doubtful whether tests can be conducted there without releasing radiation outside. Naturally, any such incident could have political repercussions too, negatively affecting the process of democratic change in Russia.

Since what could be involved now is just a few tests with a view to their final cessation within two or three years, I would request, Mr. President that you weigh once again all aspects of this issue. History would record that it was the 43rd President of the United States who took the courageous decision that would once and for all eliminate this dangerous legacy of the cold war and accelerate mankind's progress toward a world free from fear.

M. Gorbachev

June 9, 1993